

Message Text

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41

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3336

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 1798

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FR, US, NL

SUBJECT: DUTCH MEDIA REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S PARIS VISIT

REF: THE HAGUE 1759

1. ALL PARIL 8 MORNING PAPERS FRONT PAGED PICTURES OF PRESIDENT'S APRIL 7 BREAKFAST MEETING WITH SOVIET PRESIDENT PODGORNYY. IN NUMEROUS STORIES ON SERIES OF "MINI SUMMITS" IN PARIS, MOST ATTENTION DEVOTED TO PRESIDENT'S MEETINGS WITH PODGORNYY, WILSON, BRANDT, LEONE, TANAKA AND HARTLING.

2. LEFT WING DAILY VOLKSKRANT HEADLINED ITS REPORT ON VISIT BY NOTING PRESIDENT WAS "SEEING CLOSER APPROACH TO EUROPE." VOLKSKRANT REPORTED GENERAL HAIG'S COMMENTS ON PODGORNYY BREAKFAST EMPHASIZING ITS USEFULNESS IN TERMS PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO MOSCOW. VOLKSKRANT CITED CHANCELLOR BRANDT'S COMMENTS THAT HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT WAS "OPEN HEARTED AND FRIENDLY," AND BRANDT'S COMMENT THAT EVERYONE IS WORKING FOR CONSTRUCTIVE IMPROVEMENT IN US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS. VOLKSKRANT ACCOUNT PROVIDES DETAIL ON FRIENDLY GREETINGS GIVEN PRESIDENT BY CROWDS WHEN HE MADE APPEARANCES ON STREETS. IT ALSO REPORTS EMBASSY PARIS SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD EMPHASIZED CLOSER TIES BETWEEN EUROPE AND US CONSTITUTED NO THREAT TO EUROPEAN UNITY.

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3. IN ITS ACCOUNT OF PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO PARIS, CONSERVATIVE

TELEGRAAF (LARGEST CIRCULATION IN NETHERLANDS) REPORTS PRESIDENT APPEARED TO HAVE SAVE SOMETHING OF THE YEAR OF EUROPE. TELEGRAAF PROVIDED SCHEDULE OF PRESIDENT'S MEETINGS WITH VARIOUS HEADS OF STATE AND EMPHASIZED HIS INTERLOCUTORS HAD STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF PRESIDENT MAKING LONG PLANNED VISIT TO EUROPE. LIKE VOLKSKRANT, TELEGRAAF GAVE PRINCIPAL ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT'S BREAKFAST WITH PODGORNYY AND GENERAL HAIG'S COMMENTS ON THIS MEETING.

4. MODERATE ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD, IN ARTICLES HEADLINED "RUSH HOUR IN PARIS" AND "NIXON HUB OF BUSY CONSULTATIONS", REPORTED THAT DOZENS OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS HAD PARTICIPATED IN AD HOC CONSULTATIONS BUT THAT PRESIDENT WAS "HUB OF ACTIVITY." ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD REPORTS SAID THAT ALL OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL FIGURES WHOM PRESIDENT MET APPEARED TO BE POSITIVE ABOUT RESUMPTION OF POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN WESTERN EUROPE AND AMERICA, EVEN THE FRENCH. AD REPORTED PRESIDENT'S WALK FROM EMBASSY TO ELYSEE AND FAVORABLE REACTION OF CROWD HE MET ON STREET.

5. IN ITS ARTICLE ON PARIS CONSULTATIONS HEADLINED "BUSY WEEKEND FOR NIXON", LEFT WING TROUW REPORTS ENTIRE SERIES OF HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS IN PARIS BUT STRESSES PRESIDENT RECEIVED MOST ATTENTION BECAUSE OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH TOP LEADERS. TROUW REPORTED THAT IN ADDITION TO SEVEN MAJOR CONSULTATIONS PRESIDENT HAD SHAKEN HANDS AND CHATTED WITH 35 OTHER HIGH OFFICIALS AT QUAI RECEPTION FOR THOSE PARTICIPATING IN MEMORIAL SERVICE. TROUW REPORTS THAT PRIME MINISTER TANAKA HAD TO WAIT WHILE PRESIDENT WAS SAYING GOODBYE TO PODGORNYY AND THAT AT CONCLUSION OF TANAKA VISIT PRESIDENT SAID "I WILL SEE YOU AGAIN SOON IN JAPAN." TROUW REPORTED GENERAL HAIG'S COMMENT THAT JAPAN VISIT IN PREPARATION STAGE BUT NO FIRM DATE FIXED. TROUW ARTICLE COMMENTED THAT PRESIDENT'S SESSIONS WITH EUROPEAN LEADERS HAD POSITIVE EFFECT AND QUOTED BRANDT TO EFFECT THAT CONSERVATIONS HAD CLEARED UP VARIETY OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN US AND EC. TROUW NOTED PRESIDENT'S THREE STROLLS THROUGH PARIS STREETS AND HIS COMMENT THAT "I COME BACK EVERYTIME I HAVE AN EXCUSE. I FIND IT WONDERFUL." TROUW'S ARTICLE CONCLUDED WITH REPORT OF FRENCH COMMENTATORS SPECULATION PRESIDENT USED PARIS VISIT TO EMPHASIZE HE COULD CONDUCT ACTIVE FOREIGN POLICY DESPITE DOMESTIC PROBLEMS.

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6. EVENING PAPERS ALL APRIL 8 ALSO HAD CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. PRESTIGIOUS NRC HANDELSBLAD HEADLINED ITS ACCOUNT "MINI SUMMIT IN PARIS OVER US-EUROPEAN RELATIONSHIP BITTER FOR THE FRENCH." ARTICLE REPORTED PRESIDENT'S SERIES OF MEETINGS BUT TERMED HIS TWO HOUR DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT PODGORNYY "THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT OF THE WEEKEND." NRC NOTED SOVIET SPOKESMAN HAD TERMED SESSION "SPECIFIC AND CONSTRUCTIVE." IN ITS ACCOUNT, HET PAROOL (MODERATE SOCIALIST) STRESSED THAT

PRESIDENT WAS HOPEFUL" HIS UPCOMING VISIT TO MOSCOW WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL ESPECIALLY AFTER HIS TALK WITH PODGORNYY.

7. THERE HAS BEEN ONLY ONE MAJOR EDITORIAL ON VISIT. IT APPEARED IN ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD. IT BEGAN BY NOTING THAT PARIS THIS WEEKEND WAS "THE CENTER OF THE WORLD" AND THERE HAS RARELY BEEN IN SO SHORT A TIME SO MANY HIGH-LEVEL DIPLOMATIC CONVERSATIONS BUT THAT "THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT NIXON WAS THE STATESMAN AROUND WHICH EVERYTHING WAS FOCUSED." FOR A TIME HE EVEN "STOLE THE HONORS FROM KISSINGER." AD WONDERED, HOWEVER, WHETHER THESE SPONTANEOUS TALKS IN PARIS WOULD PRODUCE REAL RESULTS. AD EDITORIAL SUGGESTED PRESIDENT'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WERE PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR FLURRY OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY AND SPECULATED THE PRESIDENT WAS AIMING AT: (A) SAVING HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO EUROPE, (B) ORGANIZING AN ATLANTIC SUMMIT AND (C) TRYING TO ACHIEVE CONCRETE RESULTS ON DISARMAMENT PRIOR TO HIS UPCOMING MOSCOW VISIT. AD EDITORIALIST OPINES PRESIDENT ALSO WISHED PROVE THAT IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING HE IS AN EFFICIENT STATESMAN. IT IS IRONIC, AD STATES, THAT PRESIDENT HAD CHANCE TO DO THIS AFTER DEATH OF POMPIDOU AND ALSO "IRONIC THAT HIS LIGHTNING OFFENSIVE TOOK PLACE IN FRANCE, MOST DIFFICULT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN PARTNERS." GOULD

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